

The Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee presents:

Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder 101: A Seminar for Lawyers by Doctors

Suffolk University Law School

May 31, 2002

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

8:00 Registration and Breakfast

8:30 Welcome

8:45 - 9:15 Keynote: Psychiatric Diagnosis Criteria: A Work in Progress?

Ronald Schouten, M.D., J.D., Program Director, Law and Psychiatry Service,
Massachusetts General Hospital

Dr. Schouten will review the history of psychiatric diagnosis, the evolution of theories of mental illness, and the potential impact of new knowledge and medications on patients' rights.

9:15 - 10:45 Understanding Schizophrenia

Donald C. Goff, M.D., Director, Psychotic Disorders Program, Massachusetts
General Hospital

Dr. Goff will discuss the symptoms of schizophrenia including delusions, hallucinations, disorganization, apathy, social withdrawal, reduced emotional expressiveness, and impairment of attention and memory. He will also discuss the intertwining causes of the illness including the genetic, neurobiological and environmental components. His presentation will encompass the current state of treatment and likely permanent life impairments for individuals who suffer from schizophrenia.

11:00 - 12:30 Understanding Bipolar Disorder

**Gary S. Sachs, M.D., Director, Harvard Bipolar Research Program,
Massachusetts General Hospital**

Dr. Sachs will introduce the mood disorder concept focusing on bipolar disorder. He will emphasize the ways in which the illness alters perception, cognition, and behavior in addition to mood and will review common misunderstandings surrounding the illness. He will also cover the basics of treatment and offer some case vignettes to illustrate the discussion.

12:30 Lunch (on your own)

**1:30 - 3:15
Practice**

Effects of Mental Illness on Legal Standards and Courtroom

**Thomas G. Gutheil, M.D., Co-Director, Program in Psychiatry and the Law,
Massachusetts Mental Health Center**

Dr. Gutheil will discuss the impact of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder on the legal standards of competency and dangerousness. He will offer pragmatic advice on handling mental illness in the courtroom focusing on case presentation, client involvement and the role of expert testimony.

3:30 - 5:00

Fighting the Good Fight in Substituted Judgment Proceedings

**Judith G. Edersheim, M.D., J.D., Law and Psychiatry Service, Massachusetts
General Hospital**

Dr. Edersheim will offer a "how to" approach to the representation of hospitalized psychiatric patients with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. She will address three types of proceedings involving substituted judgment determinations: psychiatric commitment, commitment for treatment of substance abuse, and capacity to consent to medical treatment. While sensitizing practitioners to common clinical and procedural treatment issues, she will suggest strategies for advocacy, highlight areas for investigation and provide tools to challenge opposing counsel.

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